

Message Text

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WARSAW FOR RED CAVANEY

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TAGS/ OVIP (GERALD R. FORD)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

1. POSSIBLE EXCHANGE OF GREETINGS AND PRESS RELEASE
FOR US-FINLAND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE FUND.

2. I KNOW YOU HAVE NOT YET AGREED TO DO THIS, BUT
IN EVENT YOU DO, HERE IS THE BACK-UP.

PRESIDENT FORD'S REMARKS ANNOUNCING ESTABLISHMENT OF A
PERMANENT U.S.-FINLAND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE FUND.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

PRESIDENT KEKKONEN AND I HAD A VERY USEFUL TALKS ON A
NUMBER OF MATTERS. THERE IS ONE POINT IN PARTICULAR FROM
OUR TALKS TO WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOUR ATTENTION.
THIS IS THAT THE U.S. AND FINLAND HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT
TO ESTABLISH A TRUST FUND TO FINANCE A BINATIONAL
EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM BETWEEN THE UNITED
STATES AND FINLAND ON A PERPETUAL BASIS.

AS YOU KNOW, THIS PROGRAM HAS BEEN UNIQUE AMONG
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THE SO-CALLED FULBRIGHT-HAYS PROGRAMS IN THE WORLD, FOR

IT HAS BEEN FINANCED WITH THE STEADY REPAYMENT OF FINLAND ON ITS DEBTS TO THE U.S. WHICH DATE FROM THE WORLD WAR I PERIOD. THE U.S. CONGRESS, IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FINLANDS INTEGRITY AND HONOR, DIRECTED THAT ALL FINNISH DEBT PAYMENTS SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR THE EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE PROGRAM BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

THIS HAS FINANCED--WITH ADDITIONAL U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS--ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS OF ITS KIND. SOME 2,000 FINNS HAVE TRAVELED AND STUDIED IN THE UNITED STATES WHILE MORE THAN 500 AMERICAN HAVE COME TO FINLAND FOR SIMILAR PURPOSES.

IN RECENT YEARS THE GOVERNMENTS AND ACADEMIC COMMUNITIES OF THE U.S. AND FINLAND HAVE BEEN CONCERNED HOW EXCHANGES WOULD BE FINANCED IN 1984 WHEN THE FINNISH DEBT WOULD HAVE BEEN PAID IN FULL. EFFORTS TO FIND A WAY TO PERPETUATE THIS PROGRAM WERE UNAVAILABLE UNTIL NOW. FINLAND RECENTLY MADE AN ORIGINAL AND INSPIRED PROPOSAL.

THIS FINNISH INITIATIVE PROVIDES THAT THE ENTIRE REMAINING DEBT WILL BE PAID TO THE U.S. IN 1976--A SIGNIFICANT AND THOUGHTFUL FINNISH GESTURE TO OUR OWN BICENTENNIAL. THIS MONEY, NEARLY THREE MILLION DOLLARS, WILL THEN BE DEPOSITED BY THE U.S. IN A SPECIAL TRUST FUND IN FINLAND. THE PROCEEDS OF THIS PERPETUAL FUND WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE FULBRIGHT COMMISSION, TO FURTHER THE FINNISH-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

THE MERIT OF THE FINNISH INITIATIVE SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. IT REFLECTS A LONG AND FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP AMONG OUR TWO PEOPLES, BUT MORE SPECIFICALLY, IT WILL ASSURE A PERPETUAL SOURCE OF FINANCING OF CULTURAL INTERCHANGE BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES AND THE ENRICHMENT PARTICULARLY OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND OUR SCHOLARS.

JOINT US-FINNISH ANNOUNCEMENT
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PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICAN AND PRESIDENT URHO KEKKONEN OF FINLAND MET AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE IN HELSINKI ON JULY 29, 1975, ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT FORD TO FINLAND FOR THE CONCLUDING PHASE OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE. THE TWO PRESIDENTS DISCUSSED SEVERAL PROBLEMS OF INTEREST TO BOTH COUNTRIES.

AS A RESULT OF THESE DISCUSSIONS, PRESIDENT FORD AND PRESIDENT KEKKONEN REACHED AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH A JOINTLY-ADMINISTERED TRUST FUND TO ASSURE PERMANENT FINANCING OF THE U.S.-FINNISH EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES KNOWN AS THE ASLA PROGRAM.

IN 1949, THE AMERICAN CONGRESS, IN RECOGNITION OF FINLAND'S EFFORTS TO PAY DEBTS INCURRED IN THE WORLD WAR I PERIOD, PASSED A JOINT RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE THAT ALL FUTURE PAYMENTS BY FINLAND WOULD BE USED FOR U.S. FINNISH EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PURPOSES.

UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES PAYMENTS WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL 1984. HOWEVER, FINLAND AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE BEEN CONCERNED THAT AFTER THAT DATE THERE MIGHT BE INSUFFICIENT FUNDS TO FINANCE A VIABLE EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM. IN ORDER TO INSURE THE PERMANENT CONTINUATION OF THE PROGRAM, FINLAND OFFERED TO PAY THE ENTIRE DEBT BY 1976. THE UNITED STATES, IN TURN, HAS OFFERED TO DEPOSIT THESE FUNDS IN A JOINT ACCOUNT IN FINLAND TO BE USED TO FINANCE THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM ON A PERPETUAL BASIS. THE GOVERNMENTS OF FINLAND AND THE UNITED STATES WILL FORMALIZE THIS AGREEMENT THROUGH AN EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATIC NOTES.

THE GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND WILL TURN OVER THE UNITED STATES IN 1976 FOR THE JOINT FUND APPROXIMATELY \$2.8 MILLION WHICH WILL REPRESENT THE REMAINING PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST PAYMENTS ON ITS DEBT TO THE UNITED STATES.

SINCE 1950, APPROXIMATELY 2,000 FINNISH LECTURERS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESEARCH SCHOLARS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, SPECIALISTS, AND EXPERTS HAVE MADE PROFESSIONAL VISITS TO THE UNITED STATES, WHILE SOME 500 AMERICANS HAVE STUDIED OR TAUGHT IN FINLAND IN THE SAME PERIOD. IN FINLAND THIS EXCHANGE PROGRAM IS KNOWN AS THE ASLA PROGRAM, AN ABBREVIATION FOR THE FINNISH TITLE OF THE DEBT REPAYMENT GRANTS.

IN ADDITION TO GIVING ALL THE FINNISH DEBT REPAYMENTS TO THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM, THE UNITED STATES HAS ANNUALLY ALLOCATED SUBSTANTIAL DEPARTMENT OF STATE FUNDS TO FINANCE THE PROGRAM.

THE SUCCESS OF THE ASLA EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM MOVED BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO SEEK SUCH A SOLUTION TO INSURE

THE CONTINUATION OF THE PROGRAM.

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